

Fine Arts," it was somewhat hard for the
Goncourts that
their play should be rendered responsible for
her lapses.
But good came out of evil, as the saying goes; if
" Henriette
Marshal" was hissed off the stage, the *fracas*
made the
Goncourts famous. Two nights of uproar
contributed more
to popularise their name and to win readers for
their works
than years of zealous toil. They had long been
esteemed in
literary circles, but hitherto they had remained
unknown to
the great public. Their novels, like their
historical works,
had secured no large sales, whereas now all was
altered, and
the change, and the circumstances which
wrought it, pro-
duced a deep impression on Emile Zola,
confirmed him in
the view which he had already begun to
entertain, that fame
in the modern literary world depended largely
on a resound-
ing *coup-de-pistolet*.

He was fairly well pleased with the result of
his volume
of " Oontes," but prior to the " Henriette
Mare*chal" scandal¹
he had already declared that he would greatly
have preferred
a severe " slating" to some of the milk-and-
water praise of
his reviewers. As he wrote to Valabregue,
however, he
lived in the hope that his next book, "La
Confession de
Claude," would almost " decide his reputation."
It was pub-
lished by Lacroix, on November 25, 1865,² at
the Librairie

Internationale, which he had now established in conjunction with a Flemish *confrere*, Yerboeckhoven; and this time the arrangement with Zola was that the latter should receive a

¹ The first performance took place on December 5, 1865.

² Though " 1866 " appears on the title-page, the above is the exact date of publication and registration at the Ministry of the Interior. Alexis is therefore in error -when he says the book appeared in October, The question of date has some importance in connection with Zola's departure from Hachette's and the cause thereof.